

Elementary ENGLISH

MARCH 1947

Problems in Reading

—
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 Miller

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Corrective and Remedial Cases: Analysis and Follow-up

EMMETT ALBERT BETTS¹

THE DISCUSSION deals with these five questions: *First*, what is reading? *Second*, what are some of the denotations and connotations of the term *reading retardation*? *Third*, what types of differentiated programs are required to meet the needs of all children? *Fourth*, how can the basic reading needs of children be evaluated? *Fifth*, what basic factors merit consideration in corrective and remedial programs?

Reading

In order to put a discussion of reading problems on a sound footing, some consideration should be given to the use of the term *reading*. In this discussion, the point of view regarding the nature of reading may be summarized in terms of these premises: First, reading is only one *aid* to learning; as a means of learning it may be over-emphasized. Second, reading is one means of *communication*; hence, it is a *social* tool to be developed in social situations. Third, reading is a *facet* of language. Achievement in oral language is a pre-requisite to reading; achievement in reading is a nec-

¹Director, Reading Clinic, Department of Psychology, Temple University. This paper was read before the National Committee of Teachers of English, November 29, 1946.

essary condition for success in writing activities. Fourth, reading is a *process* of reconstructing the facts, or experience, behind the symbols. Clues to meaning are found neither in words nor in experiences. Instead, the chief clue to meaning exists in language-experience relationships. Hence, reading is more than the rhythmical pronunciation of words. In summary, the study of reading problems requires basic information regarding child development, the fundamental principles of learning, and the semantic basis of language.

Retardation In Reading

Retardation in reading is a much discussed but not generally understood problem in education and psychology. Retardation is a term that may designate two general types of reading problems. Included in the first type are those individuals whose hearing comprehension exceeds their visual, or reading, comprehension. There is, however, a second type; namely, the individual who pronounces words rhythmically without reading, or understanding. In short, retardation in reading exists when the individual is not achieving up to his capacity in reading situations because of a deficiency in language skills or in experiences.

Oftentimes there is a tendency to confuse general mental retardation with reading retardation. Reading retardation has been found at *all* levels of intelligence. While it is true that retardation in reading blocks *general* educational progress, usually it is more specific in nature. The mentally retarded child cannot be expected to participate in the reading program for children of normal or superior intelligence. His present needs require evaluation, and his vocational needs must be anticipated. By and large, remedial and corrective reading programs are designed for children of normal or superior intelligence.

Surveys of unselected school populations reveal two startling facts. *First*, in many school situations of the past, remedial and corrective programs were designed to bring "slow" learners up to

some arbitrarily established grade average. These attempts were made in spite of available data on the limited mental capacities of some of the children "below the grade average". *Second*, in most school situations, children above, as well as below, the grade average are retarded in reading. When capacity is evaluated in relation to achievement, the incidence of retardation among children at or above grade average is as high as among children at or below grade average. In fact, there are school situations where there is a higher incidence of reading retardation among those who achieve up to and above "grade level" than among those who achieve below grade average. Hence, it appears necessary (and not too late) to come to some professional understandings regarding the use of the term *retardation*.

Types of Reading Programs

Three terms appear to be generally accepted to designate three types of reading programs: *developmental*, *corrective*, and *remedial*. There is no sharp line of demarcation between developmental and corrective reading, or between corrective and remedial reading. Instead, reading problems should be discussed in terms of a continuum. On one end of the continuum falls the majority of reading problems—the developmental. At the other end of the continuum fall the minority or "fag end" group—the remedial. Corrective reading problems lie between the remedial and the developmental.

Developmental reading is a term used to indicate the type of program required for the majority of learners in elementary and secondary schools and colleges. Candidates for a developmental program have achieved a level of competence commensurate with their needs. In a sense, their reading achievement is equivalent to their experience achievement. Their level of visual comprehension in reading situations approximates their level of hearing comprehension; their language skills are adequate for their communication needs. In other words, their *achievement* in reading is about the same as their *capacity* for reading. Other things being equal, these

individuals have achieved a satisfactory adjustment to school situations where instruction is differentiated.

The number of individuals who qualify for a developmental reading program vary from one school situation to another. In general, sixty to ninety-five per cent of the school population is in need of this type of program.

Developmental reading deals primarily with language-experience relationships (or concept development), attitudes, versatility in reading situations, critical evaluations, appreciations, use of references, and study techniques and conditions. Since this type of program embraces more than reading techniques *per se*, the responsibility for it must be shared by all teachers who guide learners in their reading and study activities.

Corrective reading is a term used to indicate the type of reading program required for non-readers and retarded readers who do not have associative learning disabilities. In general, there are two major types of corrective reading problems: language skill deficiency and verbalism (or experience deficiency).

The most obvious and the most easily detected type of corrective reading problem is the inability to pronounce words. Many non-readers and most of the retarded readers require corrective reading instruction. This language skill deficiency is usually accompanied by a number of symptoms. These symptoms include word-by-word reading, vocalization, insertions, substitutions, regressions, finger-pointing, tensions, and the like. Faulty habits and inadequacies of this type may be corrected by beginning at the learner's level of achievement and providing systematic guidance based on his needs.

The second type of corrective reading program is required for those individuals whose language facility out-runs their background of basic experiences. These individuals may pronounce words with unusual facility. They may read with rhythm. And they may achieve respectable scores on a verbal test of comprehension! But,

they cannot reconstruct the experience behind the symbols. For them, language is empty of meaning. This is one of the most common and one of the most serious types of reading disabilities. This situation presents a corrective reading problem in the sense that the basic notions of reading must be revised along with the development of concepts.

As matters now stand, a significant percentage of the school population is in need of a differentiated program of corrective reading. In general, about five to forty per cent falls in this category. The number requiring this type of help depends upon the professional qualifications of the teachers as reflected in practices, admission and promotion policies, the extent to which instruction is differentiated, and so on.

With a minimum of additional preparation, an elementary school teacher can deal effectively with corrective reading problems in the classroom. When these problems are assigned to classroom teachers, a differentiated program of instruction becomes imperative.

Corrective reading, then, is required for those whose language skills are less than their experience and for those whose language facility is greater than their experience. In the first instance, the *language* facet of mental constructs is deficient or absent. In the second instance, the *experience* facet of mental constructs is deficient or absent. Both types of corrective problems are menaces to emotional health and social adjustment.

In many school situations, teachers with special professional preparation are assigned to groups of children in need of corrective reading. This is especially desirable when an inadequate developmental reading program has permitted the accumulation of a large number of seriously retarded readers. The chief danger in this approach lies in the attitude of the classroom teachers. Sometimes they are inclined to shift their responsibilities for guidance in reading to the corrective reading teacher.

The term *remedial reading* is used to designate the type of program required by retarded readers characterized by associative learning disabilities. These individuals experience unusual difficulty in the establishment and retention of reading skills, especially when a visual-auditory approach is used. They are the individuals who may "learn a word today and forget it before tomorrow." In general, they are the least understood of all who experience difficulty in learning to read. In the technical literature dealing with these problems, remedial reading cases have been designated by a number of terms, including word-blindness, visual aphasia, alexia, and dyslexia.

All remedial reading cases are not alike. Dyslexias may be best described in terms of a continuum. At one end of the continuum are the mild dyslexias. These cases may have one or more dyslexia characteristics of a relatively low order. At the other end of the continuum are the extreme dyslexias—the total non-readers. They have many dyslexia characteristics, each of which may be highly significant. Differences characterize remedial reading problems as well as corrective and developmental problems.

The following are some of the primary characteristics of a remedial reading case:

1. Non-verbal intelligence tends to be significantly higher than verbal intelligence.
2. Visual-auditory associative learning tends to be higher than visual-visual.
3. Visual discrimination for word forms tends to be of a low order.
4. Hearing comprehension is significantly higher than visual, or reading, comprehension.
5. Auditory memory span tends to be relatively higher than visual memory span.
6. Memory for related material tends to be relatively higher than memory for unrelated material.
7. Oral re-reading tends to be as unrhythmical as oral reading at sight.
8. "Central" dominance tends to be confused.

All children with reading and other types of language disabilities present emotional problems. Frequently, these emotional problems are reflected in social maladjustments. In some instances, the reading problem is a symptom of a basic personality aberration. Frequently, however, social and emotional rehabilitation is achieved in part by the remediation of the reading disability. In any event, psycho-therapy must complement remedial reading instruction.

Approximately one to five per cent of the school population experiences difficulty with reading because of associative learning disabilities. These problems require the attention of teachers who understand them. At present, it is no more reasonable to expect the average classroom teacher to deal with special remedial reading problems than it would be to expect a general medical practitioner to diagnose and correct a serious visual problem.

In summary, the classification of reading problems permits better perspective of the instructional jobs ahead. This classification is one step toward a thorough-going program of differentiated instruction. Other things being equal, instruction must be differentiated in terms of learning problems. Idiosyncrasies in learning to read are real.

Analysis of Reading Problems

A child with a reading problem can be detected in the primary grades. In many schools, there still prevails the policy of promotion on the basis of reading achievement. Hence, a lack of reading achievement is usually the chief cause of failure or the prime reason for questioning promotion. Reading problems can be detected in the primary grades, but unanalyzed reading problems usually accumulate in the intermediate grades. At this level they become very serious because of the tendency to over-emphasize reading as a learning aid.

A reading problem is an individual thing. Children have reading problems. To analyze reading problems, the individual is studied. To arrive at the cause of the problem, the child and his environment

are investigated. The study of the child is guided by questions such as these: Is he ready for systematic guidance in reading? What is his capacity for reading? What is his present level of reading achievement? Is he handicapped by visual inefficiency or a hearing impairment? What is his level of oral language competence? In what kind of emotional climate has he lived? What is his level of social competence? In short, the teacher is not dealing with an isolated reading problem; she studies a child. To understand the reading problems of the child, the teacher must understand the child. This point of view appears to characterize the successful teacher.

As implied in the classification of reading programs, there are reading problems. The emphasis is on the *plural* nature of reading problems. There are as many different types of reading problems as there are children and environments.

Research has indicated that there is no one universal cause of reading problems. The reading problems of each child are characterized by a cluster of difficulties. The child, perhaps, might have overcome one or two difficulties, but the mosaic of difficulties has proved insurmountable.

Continuous Analysis. An analysis of a child's reading difficulties should precede instruction. The analysis affords a basis for determining the psychological and pedagogical approaches, for estimating achievement levels, for predicting probable progress, and for resolving emotional conflicts. However, the analysis of needs is not terminated with the scoring and interpretations of tests. Instead, this is where the analysis begins.

During the initial stage of this analysis, the child's insight regarding his own problems is enhanced. On the basis of this insight, guidance is given in remedial or corrective reading. As the child progresses, he is made aware of his growth, of his needs, of the purposes of the activities. This approach requires every-day analysis.

Standardized Tests. Standardized tests, scales, and inventories are

useful in many respects. First, they provide administrators and supervisors with objective evidence regarding pupil achievement. Second, they provide norms against which pupil achievement and capacity for achievement may be evaluated. Third, they provide school psychologists with objective techniques for measuring aptitudes and for detecting deficiencies of such functions as memory span, associative learning, and visual discrimination. Fourth, standardized tests have furthered professional understanding regarding the nature of reading readiness, the complexity of the reading process, factors in capacity for reading, and types of personality problems. In these and other respects, standardized tests have made substantial contributions to modern programs of differentiated instruction.

In some situations, standardized tests have been mis-used. First, standardized tests of achievement in reading and spelling do not provide the necessary information for grouping. They do *not* provide an index to the *independent* reading level. They do *not* provide an index to the *instructional* reading or spelling levels. They do *not* provide an index to the *achievement* level in spelling. They tend to place the child at his basic *frustration* level which is one to four grade levels *above* his instructional level. These statements are especially valid for retarded readers.

In the second place, standardized tests are not sensitive to small increments of growth. Usually, a standardized test is designed to measure gross gains over a number of grade levels. Hence, their value as a means of motivation through awareness of progress is limited, indeed.

Third, standardized group tests of intelligence leave much to be desired as devices for estimating capacity for reading. Generally speaking, reading ability and mental ability correlate only about .60, leaving many unaccounted for factors in capacity for reading. Furthermore, the verbal nature of many standardized tests of intelligence precludes the possibility of estimating the capacity of retarded readers and non-readers. In fact, some widely used tests of intelli-

gence are reading tests. Too often, a fallacious estimate of a retarded reader's mental ability is verified erroneously by means of a reading test of intelligence.

Fourth, standardized tests of reading achievement sometimes prove too cumbersome and round-about for getting at a problem. There are easier and more direct ways of estimating reading achievement. Furthermore, there are short cuts and more functional ways to detect specific needs in word recognition, location of information, critical evaluation, and the like. Reading is a very complex process, indeed. A large battery of standardized reading tests would be required to evaluate even a few major needs.

Informal Appraisal. Probably one of the most direct and effective means of appraising reading levels and needs is the informal inventory. By using a graded series of reading material in a given area, the teacher or clinician may observe responses in a more nearly normal type of reading situation. In a well-motivated situation, it is possible to estimate the *independent* and the *instructional* reading levels. (2) In addition, specific needs may be evaluated in terms of related needs and background skills.

After the child's achievement levels have been estimated, it is possible to appraise hearing comprehension by reading to him at successively higher levels. Hearing comprehension, determined by this means, provides a satisfactory index to reading capacity. (2)

The techniques for an informal inventory are the same as those employed for a directed reading activity. The procedure may vary from a text-book to an experience approach.

An informal reading inventory has several merits. First, the teacher is given direct evidence on achievement and needs in terms of available instructional material. Second, the teacher is provided with a technique for detecting every-day needs in the classroom. Third, the child is "sold" on his needs and how to improve his status. The procedure is sound, understandable, and practical.

A Minimum Analysis. From the above discussion, it is clear that remedial reading problems require more study than corrective reading problems. Retarded readers may present either corrective or remedial problems. This is also true of non-readers. In some instances, the underlying cause may have reading readiness implications. Remedial reading cases have more learning deficits and more serious disabilities than corrective reading cases. Corrective reading cases may require only minutes of study, while remedial cases may require hours of investigation.

For corrective cases, these questions require attention: Is the child ready for systematic guidance in reading? What is the *independent* reading level? The *instructional* reading level? The *frustration* level? The *hearing comprehension* level? What is the instructional level in spelling? The achievement level? How does the child feel about his problem? Is there a visual inefficiency? (2, 4) A hearing impairment? (2, 4) Is the child physically ready for learning? What are his chief interests? (9) Every classroom teacher must have the answers to these questions. Fortunately, an outlay of only a few cents is required to make these systematic, informal appraisals.

Additional information must be obtained on remedial reading cases. Professional preparation beyond that required for a classroom teacher is needed in order to use short-cuts to the study of remedial reading problems. Here, again, adequate professional preparation should permit the remedial reading teacher or the clinician to study the problem with a very few gadgets and special tests. In remedial cases, these additional questions require attention: In what type of emotional climate has the child lived? (9) What developmental factors have contributed to the disability? What is the relationship between non-verbal and verbal intelligence test scores? Does oral re-reading improve rhythm? What is the relationship between associative learning test scores? What are the relationships between memory span test scores? Is there a confusion in "central" dominance? What type of remedial reading approach is indicated by

the interest level? (2) What type of remedial reading approach is indicated by the case typing? (1) What is the prognosis?

Corrective and Remedial Reading Procedures

The psychological basis for corrective and remedial instruction depends upon the nature of the problem. The more extreme the problem is, the more difficulty the child has in associating meaning with visual symbols. Children who do not have associative learning deficits may learn by visual (non-oral) or visual-auditory (traditional) methods. Children with extreme corrective reading problems or mild remedial reading problems appear to profit from visual-auditory-kinaesthetic methods. Most remedial reading cases appear to respond to visual-auditory-kinaesthetic-tactile (Fernald) methods. Hence, a differentiated psychological approach must be made to corrective and remedial instruction. (1)

The pedagogical basis for corrective and remedial instruction depends upon the level of professional competence of the teacher, the interest level of the child, and the prognosis. When the prognosis indicates rapid progress, a basal reader approach may be satisfactory for a corrective reading case. For remedial reading cases, an experience approach or a modified experience approach is usually indicated. (1)

Remedial or corrective reading instruction begins with the analysis. All children with learning disabilities are frustrated in school and at home. Continued frustration leads to emotional aberrations, reflected in social maladjustments. In some instances, the personality problems have presented the initial difficulty. Hence, the analysis must initiate the long, slow process of rehabilitation.

Any individual whose language skills are inadequate to meet his communication needs is in trouble. For normal individuals, reading has well-known therapeutic and prophylactic value. Hence, retarded readers and non-readers stand to profit doubly from remedial and corrective instruction. In the first place, it makes possible the

use of reading as a learning aid. Secondly, through reading a better balance of values may be achieved.

There is only one way to be poor—and that is, poor in spirit. Children in need of corrective or remedial instruction *are* poor in spirit. Effective instruction can raise children to new levels of performance. It can help them to become rich in spirit. This is one of the important contributions of teachers in this troubled world.

Summary

1. Reading is only one aid to the development of language-experience relationships.
2. Retardation in reading exists when there is a deficit in either the language or the experience facet of a mental construct.
3. Since developmental reading involves language-experience relationships, all teachers have the responsibility for this phase of the school programs.
4. The major instructional job in corrective reading is the reduction of verbalism through the use of other types of learning aids.
5. A second instructional job in corrective reading is the improvement of language skills up to the point where they are adequate to deal with experiences.
6. The analysis of reading problems begins with the study of child development.
7. The analysis of reading problems may begin with the administration of a standardized test of reading achievement, but it is not completed until a study is made of the child as he reacts to the instructional materials in the classroom.
8. Intelligent guidance by parents, teachers, and librarians is based on information regarding the child's independent reading level as well as his interests.
9. Intelligent guidance of reading in classroom situations is based on information regarding the child's instructional level in reading.

10. Sufficient information for corrective reading instruction is available in the child's guidance folder. (Sometimes this is buried in the principal's files!)
11. Remedial reading problems may be detected in the classroom, but usually they require a detailed study of the child's handicaps.
12. Remedial and corrective reading instruction is double-edged: increased language skills improve communication possibilities, and personality development is enhanced.

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"Going Places" in Reading

WILLIS E. PRATT¹

CRITICS OF current educational practice assume that the modern school no longer attaches importance to the tools of learning. Most of these do not understand that more progress has been made in reading instruction, both as an art and a science, in the past twenty-five years than was made in three hundred years before that time. A look at current trends will convince the most skeptical that great strides are being made in this area.

Reading Readiness

Perhaps the most important of these trends has been in the field of reading readiness, a phase of reading which demanded our attention for the first time about twenty-five or thirty years ago. One can recall a time when all children who entered the first grade were either potentially "good readers" or "too slow to learn to read." No other explanation for failure of a child to learn to read when he entered was expected. Little more than fruitless efforts to demand his attention to something in which he was doomed to failure ever came about.

We now know that many children enter school who are not ready for formal reading instruction. In many places, readiness to read which will make it possible for a child to succeed with some of his first school efforts is being developed. A child's readiness to read depends upon three major factors which can be measured to some extent. The first is one which we have recognized as the intellectual factor in reading readiness. There is general agreement that child development is the most signifi-

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cant factor in aptitude for reading. The use of a mental test as one of the measures for reading readiness is an indication of the importance of this factor. But if intelligence were the only factor operating in reading readiness one would expect to find almost perfect correlation of intelligence and reading success, and the studies do not bear out these facts. This is likely true because there are many factors, not ability alone, which influence success in reading, and it is very difficult to disentangle them. In the second place, general mental maturity as measured by intelligence tests is only a part of specific reading readiness. Speech and language affect a child's readiness to read. For to be able to read a child must have a facility in the use of language. *How often we forget to teach the child to talk in our fervent haste to teach a child to read.*

Research has shown the close relationship between visual discrimination and reading aptitudes as well as the acquisition of adequate concepts for the comprehension of reading. We have found, too, that other factors such as a facility in thinking and using ideas, memory span, auditory discrimination, the ability to keep a sequence of events in mind are all intellectual factors which do influence in some degree the reading aptitudes of children. We have made some progress in recognizing these intellectual factors in reading aptitudes. More adequate measures of them will be found in the future.

Perhaps the most important trend in the recognition of reading readiness has been in the area of social development and emotional adjustment. Interests and desires for reading are necessary adjuncts to reading success. The lack of such desires and interests has been found to account for many of the difficulties which non-readers face. It is true that a genuine desire on the part of the pupil to read often aids him in the comprehension of the material and furnishes the motivation which carries him through many difficult situations. This desire for

learning, or wanting to know, appears to be a prerequisite to success in reading. How great is the effect of this factor, however, is still undetermined.

The breadth of a child's experience probably conditions to a great extent his readiness to read. The cultural background of his home which provides opportunities found in books, magazines and pictures and associations with visitors will greatly enhance his chance for success with reading. For as Bamberger states, "We read quite literally with what we have seen and heard and smelled and tasted. We read with the observations we have made and the deductions we have drawn from them." Immaturity due to the lack of many types of experiences and educational opportunities may often delay success in reading.

Vocabulary too has been found to be an important factor in reading readiness. That vocabulary is probably a result of social contacts and environmental conditions has resulted in its being considered a most important factor in reading aptitudes. To be successful in reading, the child's vocabulary must be sufficient for him to recognize quickly the meanings of words and groups of words.

Only in recent years have we recognized such emotional factors as timidity, self-consciousness, lack of self-confidence, the tendency to become discouraged, nervous instability, and the lack of integration as indications of the lack of readiness for reading. Although we know too little as yet about the effect of such factors on reading ability, a study in the future may reveal some rather startling results in this area. Social and emotional problems such as are to be found in certain traits and characteristics in the nationality and home influence of children seem to influence their ability to attack the reading problem.

While no comprehensive studies have been made of the effects of kindergarten training on reading readiness, there is a

real indication that kindergarten training does enable more children to succeed with reading during their first year of school experience. *Such training has so much effect upon reading readiness that tests which have been constructed to measure it are no longer considered reliable for measuring both groups of children with the same scale.**

The continued study of the intellectual, the physical, and the social and emotional factors which are so closely allied with reading aptitudes is a desirable trend in reading instruction. Nor should we consider this problem of reading readiness only for pre-school children. Its principles can be applied to children at any level. The recognition of reading readiness has become a problem which the teacher of children of any age should recognize and apply in attacking the reading instruction problem of a group of children or adults.

Reading Attitudes

A second trend in reading instruction is the development of good attitudes *of* and *toward* reading. Perhaps too little attention has been paid in the past to the importance of developing a desire to read in children. An industrialist once said, "When I was in school I was taught *how* to read but not taught *to* read." This is merely expressing what a great many other people of mature age feel now—that too much attention was given to the mechanics of the reading process and too little toward the development of desirable attitudes toward reading. Some may feel that the tremendous amount of reading materials which are now being published and read by the great masses of people is an indication of the effectiveness of the school program in creating reading interests. Especially is this true when one considers the numbers of books which were shipped to and read by the men overseas during the past war. But should one ex-

* See *American School Reading Readiness Test*. Bloomington, Illinois: Public School Publishing Company, 1941.

amine closely or even superficially the types of reading materials which are displayed in most news rooms or drug store counters, he might be disappointed at the kinds of tastes which have been developed for adult reading at the present time. It is in this area that the public school has a responsibility for developing an appreciation for better reading materials and a greater discrimination in selecting them.

Relating Reading To Other Fields

Perhaps a third very significant trend in reading instruction is found in relating reading to all of the fields of learning. It has only been in recent years that teachers in other areas have begun to concern themselves with the reading tool as an important factor in carrying on successful learning experiences in all areas. We know now that attention must be paid to the special vocabulary which must be developed within the fields of the social sciences and natural sciences, mathematics, and other fields. Different kinds of reading skills are needed for different kinds of reading materials. Methods to be employed in reading a novel differ sharply from those to be employed in reading scientific materials or in reading descriptive materials or in reading which is used in the solution of problems.

In some places, this problem has been faced by referring those who seem to have a reading deficiency in a special field to the reading teacher for help. Perhaps this is the only solution at the present time until it is possible to train teachers in all fields in techniques of reading and in remedial measures.

Remedial Reading

Certainly a fourth trend in reading instruction has been in the emphasis on remedial reading to which we have turned much of our attention during recent years. There are those who say remedial reading would not be necessary if we had

an adequate program for developing reading habits, skills and attitudes at times when children normally succeed with them. But one cannot visualize the time when we will have reached such a level of perfection that our children, either because of themselves, or because of the learning process or the teacher, will accomplish what each normal child could at any given age. And, hence, remedial reading is destined to remain an important responsibility of our school system for years to come.

In most schools of the present we have thought of remedial reading largely at the elementary school level. Only recently has this been recognized as a responsibility of the junior and senior high schools. In many junior high schools at present, reading is a part of the language arts program now included as one of the curricular requirements. Special reading classes have been established for junior and senior high school pupils who have shown deficiencies in these fields. The results in some such remedial programs have been little short of amazing. Some children at the junior high school level are increasing their reading grade levels by as much as three or four years within a single year when proper attention has been given to their problem and sufficient time spent to enable them to master the techniques and skills involved in learning how to read successfully.

At the Pennsylvania State College there has been offered for some time a remedial reading program for college students. Some of the improvements which have been made in individual cases have been remarkable. Some college students increased their reading grade level from two to three years within the space of a single semester when remedial reading exercises were carried out under competent instruction. This trend will not stop at the college level, for the recent war has taught us that there are literally hundreds of thousands of adults who cannot read effectively. A few institutions of higher learning in the

country have already attacked this problem. Reading should become one of the essential parts of the adult educational program which will soon find its place as a part of the responsibility of the public schools in this country.

Word Meaning

A fifth trend, in which only a beginning has been made, appears to be in the field of semantics in the building of reading materials for children. In truth, the surface has hardly been scratched in the scientific development of vocabulary in terms of the meanings of words. At the present time, most vocabularies are built in terms of words found in children's materials and in children's usage, with little or no recognition of the vast variety of meanings which are attached to some words. A recent study which is not yet completed indicates that in some cases words which are used rather commonly for children have as many as fifty different meanings attached to them which the reading materials themselves do not recognize. Much scientific research is needed in this field in order to enable authors and publishers to build the vocabularies of beginning reading materials in such a way that confusion does not confront young pupils in the development of basal reading materials.

Many teachers of beginning reading do not recognize that many of the common words with which children are confronted carry with them numerous concepts which make the understanding of such words much more difficult than is at first apparent. Even mature foreign students are often confronted with the difficulty in learning the English language because of the many differences in meanings which the same combinations of symbols represent in our own language. While sufficient research is not yet available to enable teachers to recognize the wide variety of differences in the meanings of

words, nonetheless the recognition of this on the part of teachers of beginning reading can do much to eliminate the confusion which confronts pupils who are attempting to develop for themselves a vocabulary with this tool. Much more will be done in this area in the very near future so that reading materials will in truth become developmental in terms of word concepts rather than merely developmental in terms of word recognition.

Reading Materials

This brings us to the sixth trend in which we are at present engaged in reading instruction in the development of more adequate reading materials at the proper level. No one can deny the tremendous progress which has been made in both the quantity and quality of reading materials which are now available for American children. One needs only to be acquainted with the relatively few reading materials which are available to children in foreign lands. Countries in which individual enterprise has been stifled by dictatorial educational systems prescribe the materials which are limited to a relatively narrow field. Certainly our American system of free competitive enterprise has brought forth to the children of this country a galaxy of attractive and well organized reading books which have done much to enhance reading instruction. These have been one of our most effective means of providing interesting and attractive reading materials for children and youth of all ages.

And yet while we have made great strides much needs to be done in order to provide even better reading content. We seem to have abandoned the making of reading materials wholly on an experiential basis. Many have justly believed that common basal reading materials could not possibly meet children's particular interests and needs. Yet the attempts which were made by some inexperienced teachers to develop their own

reading vocabularies for children have for the most part failed because of the lack of time and experience. Hence, we have returned in some degree at least to the basal reading series supplemented, of course, with large numbers of supplementary readers for a developmental reading program for most children.

We still need to do much, however, in providing for differences in reading ability among children in any given grade. While recognizing a range of five or six grades in most classes in reading ability, teachers have largely had to resort to reading materials for the slowest members of their group. Often these were within their grasp so far as vocabulary was concerned but were not adapted to the interests and the needs of the pupils at that level. We find, for example, a teacher in the seventh grade who has undoubtedly children with reading grade levels of second or third grade ability. Such a teacher is confronted with the task of finding books written on that level only to find that the materials included have been prepared for seven- or eight-year-old children and hence are not a challenge to the interests of her children who are twelve and thirteen years of age chronologically. This then is a real challenge for makers of children's books of the future in providing interesting reading materials for children of several different chronological ages but with vocabularies of varying degree of reading ages.

We have still done very little in most places in adapting our reading materials in the secondary school to meet the abilities and interests and needs of pupils. Many high school children are often exposed to many of the world's best literary efforts at times when they can not appreciate them and have no interest in them. The result is that often any desire to pursue the reading of some of our greatest literature in later adolescent and adult life is largely destroyed. This is not a plea to substitute for fine pieces of literature in the high school those of inferior quality. But one is convinced that somewhere there must be

some outstanding literary contributions in our culture which are within the grasp of the average student of high school age. This is a trend in reading instruction which is destined to come about in the very near future.

Methods

With the great advance in scientific experimentation in the reading field, one cannot question the improved methods in reading which have evolved during the past two or three decades. The institution of the sight-word method in reading for the old phonetic method was probably one of the great advances in reading instruction in all of its history and yet it carried with it a weakness which was not recognized until many years later. In fact, in a great number of places it has not yet fully been understood that the old phonetic method does have for some pupils the necessary approach to reading which they cannot develop without some assistance. Unfortunately, through the sole use of the sight-word method we found able children becoming even better readers and less able children floundering in a reading technique which gave them no way of building their own vocabularies phonetically which more able students were able to seize upon without formal instruction. Hence, we find a trend to return to a use of phonetics in word development at the same time retaining the advantages which come from the psychological approach to reading in the word-sentence or story introduction. There seems little doubt that this more effective combination will do much to eliminate the necessity for some of the remedial reading which is now found at the upper grade and high school levels caused in part by a lack of recognition that there are many pupils who do need the assistance which phonetic development lends to them.

Methods in reading are destined to be improved too as a greater understanding is acquired by most teachers of the factors which influence readiness to read which was discussed

earlier in this presentation. As teachers come to apply the generally accepted psychological principles of learning to the reading process, the methods should be improved and greater efficiency in reading developed among pupils at an even earlier age than is now accomplished.

Purposeful Reading

The last and perhaps the most significant trend in reading instruction is the emphasis which is being placed upon purposeful reading, that is, on adapting the type of reading to the purpose for which reading is carried out. For too long have we considered reading of all kinds to be alike. We have come to know now that almost all types of reading require different approaches and different techniques. Too little attention is now given in showing children different approaches in reading for study and reading for enjoyment and the different techniques and methods which should be employed. Particularly in the area of how to study, in which reading is such an important tool, have the schools been negligent in assisting pupils. There seems to be a growing tendency to approach it, however, at the junior high school level long after children have found the need for it. Perhaps in the future every teacher at every level will find it his responsibility to point out to pupils the ways in which reading as a tool may be used on the one hand for enjoyment and on the other hand for investigation, for appreciation, for study, for research, for acquiring knowledge and understanding and for the many other purposes for which reading is a tool.

One could not close a discussion of trends in reading without mentioning the importance which we are giving today to individual development in all areas of learning as well as in reading. It is rather paradoxical that in a kind of education which of necessity must be a mass process we are turning now for the solution of problems to one which creates within that

mass structure an individualistic approach. And yet there has probably been no other movement in educational practice which seems to have attracted more attention and in which there seems to be more hope for the future than in individualization of educational procedure. For we know now that if there is one way in which schools are alike it is that all children in them are different from each other. We have taken long years to break down the concept that every child should in some mysterious fashion be brought to the same level of attainment in every way. And it is perhaps true that today in the large majority of schools nothing has been done to implement the findings which literally thousands of research studies have made available to us. And while an individualistic approach is important in all areas of learning, it is certainly of extreme importance in the reading field. Reading is a tool which depends upon sequential learning in great part for its development. On its mastery often depends the key to well-adjusted children in our schools. It is true that it is much easier to theorize on the desirability of providing for individual differences than it is to put them into actual practice in a classroom in which a teacher is confronted with such a wide range of differences in ability and interests. Ways should be found for preparing teachers for this task of providing adequate materials for all children. When this happens, it will be one of the most important pedagogical advances in our time. We are really "going places" in reading.

On March 12, 1912, there were twelve Girl Scouts in the United States, all living in Savannah, Georgia. Membership since then has shown a steady rise until today there are more than a million Girl Scouts in the

U. S. from ages 7 to 17. Good citizenship remains the keynote of good Girl Scouting. In its 35th year, the theme of Girl Scouting in the United States is "Girl Scouts—Better Citizens Build a Better World."

"I Hate Reading"

BETTY SUTTER¹

HOW DOES a fourteen year old boy or girl *feel* when he can't read? He hates reading and he feels "horrible" as Jim, an 8th grade boy, said to the Special Educational Guidance teacher in a remedial reading class of children of third grade ability.

In the spring of last year the writer recorded statements handicapped children made about their inability to read. These "reading histories" were typewritten, with no names attached, and given to other children to read. Children found great release in finding that others have problems.

CHILDREN IN THE 7TH AND 8TH GRADES WITH 3RD GRADE READING LEVEL

14 year old boy:

"In the first grade I broke my foot and then had to stay out a half year. I had to be failed. Before I broke my foot I could read as well as anybody. Then I got disgusted. Because I had to stay in the first grade two years the teacher (until I got to the 4th grade) didn't put me in a reading class (They had little classes like Red Birds and Blue Birds but that "don't" make any difference.) I wasn't even given a book. This was in Oklahoma. When I was in the third grade the teacher made me take a book and go down to the first grade cause I couldn't read. My 4th grade teacher took pains with me and taught me sounds. She is about the only teacher who ever helped me. Sometimes the kids shunned me cause I couldn't read—they thought I was dumb. In arithmetic I was pretty smart. My arithmetic teacher ignored me when I was right in answers because he knew I couldn't read. The Warren Lane girls were stuck up and they made remarks. I came to Crozier this year and I think I have accomplished a lot. Another thing when I was in the first grade I

¹Special educational guidance teacher, Crozier School, Inglewood, California.

fell on my head—I couldn't walk. Two years later we found out the fall bothered my eyes. The Chiropractor gave me one treatment which made me walk but he should have given me more. One eye doctor couldn't fix lenses strong enough for my eyes. When in the fourth or fifth grade I got good glasses."

This boy, when he read the unsigned stories of others with reading difficulty, said that he felt sorry for "those kids," and that he hadn't had as many troubles as others.

14 year old girl:

"I wasn't ever interested in reading. I've been to so many schools. One school would be a way ahead. All were different. I was always behind. The kids ask me why I never read in front of the class. That makes me feel funny. I'd like to be able to read."

13 year old boy:

"I don't catch on to reading. I just 'horsed' around. In the third grade I really tried. Gerald didn't. He passed and I didn't. I worked for my next third grade but we didn't do much but play harmonicas, spell, and do arithmetic—I could already do my arithmetic. In the first grade I missed lots of school because I had my tonsils out, then I took a cold, then had measles or chicken pox, and I always had colds and boils. In the fifth I began to worry about my reading. I was really bad in reading. All we did in the fourth was to have music, make a Mexican house, make clay pots, and eat tortillas. I use to wonder how they got all those letters into a word. Like 'a-n-d' I wondered how in the world they made 'and' out of that. I never read in the fifth. I was always being sent on errands, or to fix an extension cord. I wasn't in the room five minutes. I didn't do any reading in the sixth. I would use to just wait for the bell to ring. I didn't like the special teacher. She was too crabby. When in my room now and I'm working in an easy book I feel about a half inch tall. If I have to read out loud I get a knot in my belly. I now want to read. Some signs I can read and some I can't."

14 year old boy:

"When I came to the seventh grade I began to worry about my reading. It wasn't any good. I did not know my sounds. I know them now. My folks aren't worried now. I read to my mother every night. I never was interested in reading. I would look around instead of reading. My teachers would scold me when I couldn't read and I would get mean and mad and put my book away. Sometimes I would pretend I was reading. Sometimes I want to cry even now. The guy in back of me says I'm too dumb to read. I don't think I'm too dumb. I think my eyes have had a little bit to do with my trouble. I don't feel discouraged any more."

15 year old boy:

"My teacher helped me. I think I'm getting better. I don't like to read out loud."

12 year old boy:

"Scared to stand up in front of room. I was always afraid next year would be harder. I would be thinking about what I would be going to do when I got home. I didn't want to read and just didn't. I would stay out to recess after the bell rang. I'd have to have help on nearly every word. I didn't know how to read so I didn't know if I would like it or not."

14 year old girl:

"Afraid I wouldn't ever get out of school. It was my fault cause I didn't try. I never did like school. I felt like a 'heel' when others could read and I couldn't. I would 'fiddle with my finger' or something instead of read."

13 year old boy:

"My reading is hard coz up at Highland the kids laughed at me. We all talk Spanish at home. I went to the special teacher to ask for special help and she started helping me. I'm reading better than I was last year."

CHILDREN IN THE 7TH AND 8TH GRADES WITH 4TH GRADE READING LEVEL

14 year old girl:

"In the 3rd grade I was sick, got nervous, and got scared of my teacher. Until the 3rd grade I could keep up with my class. After that I was scared of all my teachers. The kids began making comments. Father would get mad at me. Kids would laugh at me (never was very popular) so I would avoid reading. I wouldn't read. I moved around so I had to do the third grade three times. My younger sister is two years behind me in school and she reads about 9th grade. I was a little weakling (weighed 58 pounds when I was 12.) I tried to read what she was reading. I wasn't good in sports. Always have been alone. My older sister has her friends and Barbara has hers. I was lonesome. My father babied me too much. Then one night he got mad at me cause I couldn't remember the word 'three'."

14 year old boy:

"In about the 5th grade I began to see my reading wasn't good. I would try to do it but my teacher would get mad at me and I would get disgusted. The only thing I was good in was math. I just didn't read. I felt bad because I couldn't do it. My folks felt bad because I did. They never scolded me. My dad said to leave him alone, that he would learn to read sometime. I didn't mind having special help in school but when mother got me a private teacher to help me outside of school I didn't like it. In school I would draw and do lots of messing around."

15 year old girl:

"Last year I knew I needed help—I felt I had to have help and had to get going. I couldn't read and I didn't care anything about reading. I felt there wasn't any use trying. I wanted to learn but felt I was too dumb. I want to know how to read when I get older. My little brother (he is nine) was out of school until he was eight because he had rickets. I take him out on the lawn and help him and tell him what I know and he tells me what he knows."

Now he can read as well as some of the kids here at Crozier. I was out of school a year. I really didn't have anybody to help me. My parents were sick and then they both died."

15 year old boy:

"I'm getting my memory back. I understand what I read now. I couldn't remember the sentence I would just read. The big words I couldn't pronounce. I felt 'kinda' low. The kids would tease me. My dad makes me read out loud once in a while. I think I'll be able to read in high school."

When this boy read the typed, unsigned accounts of others he said, "Quite a few like me. Made me remember my other school years."

14 year old boy:

"Didn't do good—way down in reading and spelling. I felt tired in school but not outside of school. I wished I could read as good as others. I was 'kinda' bashful and scared when I had to read out loud. I wouldn't read in summer and that dropped me down. I didn't like to read. When others read I could get something—like the population of a country."

13 year old girl:

"I use to not want to read in front of the class. I felt terrible. When I would have to read I'd get real hot. I'd start reading real fast which I shouldn't do. I wouldn't ask what words were when I read to myself. I felt ashamed cause my teachers would sometimes tell me to read harder when I already was trying hard. I felt ashamed when I had to go to my special reading class. Some people say if you have bad tonsils and you have them out you can read cause you have better health. I'm always having colds, it seems like. I'm out a lot and I miss a lot of work."

13 year old girl:

"I use to hate to read coz I couldn't do it. I never did much reading. I'd just sit around. In class I would just copy what the answers were even though I didn't know some of the words. When

my sister would tell me a word they would say I was dumb and I would bawl. My dad use to give me a joke to read. I'd make out like I was reading it, giggle, and he would say 'You didn't read that.' I surprised him the other day when I could read a joke for him. My little sister is 10 and she can read as well as I can. I use to tell my mother that when I got married I wouldn't be able to tell my kids a word when they wanted me to tell them, but my mother would say I would learn to read. I tell the kids at school that I can't help it but I'm trying to learn. My mother worries about my reading but she helps me. The other day my dad gave me and my little sister something to read. He asked a question about it. My sister got the answer. He said, 'See your little sister can read better than you can.' I've always been soft hearted. I cried when we found our little lost kitten. I cried when a little rabbit got his leg caught. I would, when I was little, tell my mother to take me to the doctor as there was something wrong with my head."

13 year old boy:

"It makes me so ashamed of myself—everybody teases you and laughs at you and everything else. I don't even bother with these kids. My teachers have always tried to help me. I feel now I'm really learning to read. My folks think I'm improving. I memorized in the first grade. They didn't teach me my sounds. My mother tried to teach me but it was almost too late then. In class I just would not read my work cause the words were too hard. Sometimes I would be bawled out cause I was too slow."

He said, "I went through all of them to find mine. I see it was hard for other guys, too."

7TH AND 8TH GRADERS WITH 5TH GRADE READING
LEVEL

15 year old boy:

"I was left out lots of things—like plays because I couldn't read. I didn't pay any attention to the teacher. I couldn't make out words and it took me too long."

He answered to the question of what he was thinking as he read these, "Lot of times I've played around. So have the other guys and they are sorry for it. Lot more have trouble than I knew before."

14 year old girl:

"I wanted to think of myself as good as the other kids. When I read I felt like a 'dumb-bell'. I just didn't read as you don't want to feel dumb. It hurt me when I couldn't have the workbook 'If I Were Going'—the rest got it. I never would tell anybody that my reading was poor. I hate to tell people I can't do things. To have to ask my teacher for help made me feel dumb. Kids would tease me—imitate me. I was jealous of others."

12 year old boy:

"I stuttered. I didn't worry about my reading. I would always read just about half the period and then stop."

He commented, "So many things have happened to those kids to make them poor readers."

12 year old girl:

"I thought I was the dumbest one in the room because I couldn't read. I missed a lot of school in the first because I was sick. I was the only child so my dad and mother paid lot of attention to me. I was scared to read in Sunday School and in School. I've really liked reading and got mad when I couldn't. I would look around when the rest were doing geography or history."

15 year old boy:

"I didn't like any kind of a book. I'd mess around when others were reading. I didn't care about anything but sports. I felt pretty dumb. I never felt sorry for myself cause I knew it was my fault. My dad and brothers tease me and say I'm ignorant—my mother doesn't. It is horrible if they call on me to read—I say I'm ignorant. I don't care if kids see me reading an easy book. In the little grades when I couldn't read the teachers would have me do something else or send me out of the room, that's why I didn't learn how to read."

13 year old boy:

"I began to worry in the 3rd or 4th grade. I felt funny. Reason I couldn't read was that I couldn't think fast enough. My voice would go way up and everybody would laugh so I wouldn't want to read. There was a mean teacher and she didn't help me especially. Another reason I couldn't concentrate. I'd day dream about recess. I didn't think reading was serious, and didn't pay much attention. None of this is true now. I don't know if this has anything with reading but I use to bite my nails during reading time."

Several other revealing comments were:

"Some of those guys certainly tore themselves down." "Some are worser than I am. Like in a basketball game when you aren't the only one to miss the basket." "Makes me see that you feel good when you learn to read."

Even more significant than the things the children said were their facial expressions during the telling of their "reading history" and during the time they read each other's.

The problem presented by nervous and mental diseases is an enormous one—the most serious medical problem facing our nation. *One out of every 22 living persons* will spend part of his life in a mental hospital. Recent studies indicate that one out of every ten persons in the U. S. is emotionally or mentally mal-adjusted and needs treatment for

some personality disorder. More than half the patients who visit their family doctor for some physical ailment are really suffering from some type of emotional disorder. Nervous and mental diseases take a larger toll than do cancer, infantile paralysis, and tuberculosis combined.—*Toward Mental Health*, Public Affairs Pamphlet No. 120.

Children and the Comics

MAY HILL ARBUTHNOT[†]

ANY GROWNUP who has spent much time with active, unpoetic, unliterary children, find some painful discrepancies between the books children ought to read and the materials they are actually reading. A principal complains, "Our children don't read outside of school. They listen to the radio, or they spend all their Saturdays and Sundays in the moving picture theaters." A mother adds, "My children are so busy reading the comics they won't even try a long book." And the librarians say plaintively, "Books children like and books they ought to like are two different things for most children." Here, then, are two of our problems: Why don't children read more and better books? What are the chief competitors today of the old habit of curling up in a big chair with a big book? Just at present, the cause most frequently given for children's desertion of books is the comic strip. Let's take a look at this popular scapegoat.

American Comic Strips

Sterling North tried to rouse parents and teachers to "band together to break the 'comic' magazine." May 8, 1940, in a stirring broadside in the *Chicago Daily News* entitled "a National Disgrace," he made the statement that ten million copies of these magazines are sold monthly—lurid, "sex-horror serials," depending for their appeal "upon mayhem, murder, torture, abduction—often with a child as the victim." Since this blazing invective, which was widely quoted in schools and churches throughout the country, the sale of comic magazines has doubled. Twenty million copies sold monthly, is supposed to be the latest figure,* no doubt already an understatement. Magazines from Phi Beta Kappa's *American Scholar*, to *Life*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, the *Journal of Educational Sociology*,

[†]Western Reserve University. This is the third in a series of excerpts from a forthcoming book, *Children and Books*, to be published by Scott, Foresman.

**Journal of Educational Sociology*, Dec. 1944. "The Comics There They Stand," by Harvey Zorbaugh, p. 196.

Child Study Magazine, and innumerable other publications are devoting many pages or even whole issues to the consideration of the comics. Meanwhile, their readers increase and devotees become more vehement in their defense. Poor Mr. North must sometimes wonder if his "National Disgrace" was not precisely the taboo the comics needed for a flourishing promotion. Here are some recent figures:

Group A

1. 70,000,000 or more monthly readers¹
2. 150 comics magazines, selling 20,000,000 copies monthly²
3. Children 6 to 11, 95% boys, 91% girls read comics regularly³
4. Adults 18 to 36, 41% men, 28% women read comics regularly, although only 16% of the college graduates read them.⁴

Group B

5. Captain Marvel Club has 573,119 members⁵
6. When Raven Sherman was buried in "Terry and the Pirates" 1400 letters of sympathy poured in and 450 college students faced East for a moment of silence!⁶
7. "Blondie" asking for names for her coming baby, received 400,000 letters⁷
8. The President of the United States, senators, judges, famous authors, and business magnates are supposed to have written personally to comic strip creators upon various occasions.⁸
9. In 2500 classrooms children are learning to read from "Superman" workbooks⁹
10. *Picture Stories from the Bible* are used as texts in Sunday school classes¹⁰

Perhaps we must accept the staggering statistics in the first group of figures, but there is an unmistakable suggestion of bally-

¹ through ⁹ are from "The Comics Where They Stand," by Harvey Zorbaugh, *The Journal of Educational Sociology*, Dec. 1944.

¹⁰ "Narrative Illustrations The Story of the Comic" by M. C. Gaines. *The Journal of Graphic Arts*, Vol. III, No. 2, Summer, 1942.

Mr Gaines is the president of *All-American Comics*, Inc. the author of *Picture Stories from the Bible* and the sponsor of "Superman" and "Wonder Woman."

hoo about the second group which seems to call for the proverbial grain of salt. Comic strip magnates are not hiding their light under a bushel these days, nor are they inhibited by any shrinking violet complexes. Instead, the President of *All American Comics, Inc.*, the creator of *Wonder Woman*, and their sponsors write long and lustily of their charms and values. They gravely trace the history of the comic strip from the caveman and the Egyptian picture-writers to "Superman" and his "love-appeal" counterpart. "Wonder Woman."¹¹ They write about their own wares in terms of art, literature, and psychiatry. They modestly admit that 100,000,000 Americans can't be wrong in reading the comics, and sum it all up by labeling them "America's most popular mental vitamin, the wish-fulfilling picture story."¹² All we seem to miss from these panegyrics is the unctuous voice of the radio commercial announcing the sponsor's name. It is not really needed, however, because in these articles the sponsor sponsors himself.

Even with a strong smell of promotional breezes blowing not too fragrantly in our noses, the fact remains that young America is reading the comics and liking them. It is decidedly important to ask why, and to ponder briefly their place in children's reading.

Anyone who follows the interests of neighborhood small fry will discover that they pursue loyally certain favorite characters in their purchase of comic magazines. These they must have or else. However, they are not averse to investigating others, and the comics become a kind of juvenile wampum, serving as a medium of exchange on Saturdays or after school. Following the children's favorite characters and their runners-up in the last ten years, their great variety and constant changes in subject matter appeal and emphasis are evident. In a survey, "Looking At the Comic" by the children's Book Committee of the *Child Study Association*, ten

¹¹Ibid.

¹²"Why 100,000,000 Americans Read the Comics" by William Moulton Marston. *The American Scholar*. Winter 1943-44.

Mr. Marston, an eminent psychologist, is the creator of "Wonder Woman," which is also sponsored by another eminent psychologist, Edward Thorndike and by Dr. Lauretta Bender.

classifications were listed. These classifications we shall modify and combine somewhat in their order and description.

Funnies—Once upon a time the comic strips were predominantly funny, but that was long ago. Now the slap-stick humor and the happy daftness of people and situations have almost vanished; it is rare to hear a child or an adult laugh when he reads his comics. "Mutt and Jeff," "Popeye," "Myrtle," "Blondie and Dagwood," "Bringing Up Father," "Barney Google," and a few others testify gaily to the once carefree mood of cartoons—called the "funnies." Now watching a child read his favorite strips, you see him frown anxiously and study them intently with the gravity due a desperate situation. While the scholarly creators of comics are discoursing learnedly on the catharsis of the emotions, it might be well for them to remember the catharsis of laughter. It has been years since the children have laughed, long and loud, over their comics as children used to laugh at the terrible antics of those rough "Katzenjammer Kids." A few more genuine "funnies" might be a salutary thing.

Animal heroes—Animal cartoons still remain amusing. Children and adults alike have loved "Mickey Mouse" from the time Walt Disney first created him. Mickey and Minnie, draping their long tails over their arms, strutting grandly, or skeedaddling ignominiously, are funnier than the human beings they parody so cleverly. Now the terrible-tempered "Donald Duck" has added to the hilarity of nations. The mere sight of Donald's explosive pronouncements sets us to smiling. "Funny Animals," and the big weebegone dog "Napoleon" are all entertaining, but the Walt Disney creations remain the masterpieces in this field. His animals try just the cheeky impossible things a child would like to do, but unlike the child are never entirely suppressed. The child knows they'll rise again to do something even cheekier. These animal heroes are fun and they are childlike.

Adventures, real and fantastic—Many types of comic strips are built upon the appeal of adventure both to children and youth-

fully minded adults. Whether it is "Orphan Annie," or "Batman," or "Joe Palooka," or "Flash Gordon," or "Terry and the Pirates" or "Superman," exciting, swift-moving action, with the maximum suspense, is the pattern. These adventures may be real or possible, or they may have all the magic of the old fairy tales in a modern setting. Office workers traveling towards their desks, business men facing the day's anxieties, adolescents with algebra troubles or history examinations, children trudging towards flash cards and spelling lessons, pause to look at such comic strips, and escape momentarily their sense of dull routine. Identifying themselves with their heroes, they too soar triumphantly over their troubles, escape their boredom, put the pompous in their places, and show the astonished world, once and for all, how right and how wonderful they are. This is escape if you will. It is also a release from tensions or anxieties, and may be as refreshing as a nap or a breath of fresh air. That is, provided the adventures run properly.

Horrors and torture are introduced into the comic strip less frequently than they used to be, but they still occur. Psychologists, parents, and teachers have inveighed against such episodes, and apparently to good effect; then, once more, a heroine is kidnapped, or a hero is tortured, and the protests have to be made all over again. Identifying themselves with their favorite character, children suffer acutely from such terrors. They may seem to "stand it," saying nothing about it, but they should not have to suffer defeat in their dream world, which is valuable precisely because it offers them relief from anxieties. Another objectionable phase of the adventure story seems to be especially associated with far away times or places—jungles, tropical islands, Mayan cities. In such settings scantily attired maidens are often sexily pursued by cruel monsters who chain them, or beat them, or in other ways introduce the undesirable association of sadism and sex. These are deplorable reading materials for children and youth in spite of the fact that some can survive them apparently unharmed.

Detective stories—With the tremendous popularity of detective

stories among adults it is not surprising to find that in the last five years crime and detective comics have been on the gain. G-Men, police, detectives, occasionally a child, track down gangsters, murderers, kidnappers, thugs of all kinds. Like the radio serials the comics justify their crime atmosphere by telling us repeatedly that in the end the criminal always pays and pays. Punishment follows hard upon the heels of a triumphant capture of the villains by the right characters in the story. This sounds all right, but we agree that it is not well to use the old fairy tales if the atmosphere is predominantly one of bloodshed, trickery, terror, with only a brief proportion of the tale dedicated to the demonstration that crime does not pay. The same principle should hold for the radio, the movies, and the comics.

In one of her bad periods, "Orphan Annie," whose ups and downs used to be of the most innocuous character, was sent to live with a villainous old woman who was a kind of Murder Incorporated. Annie knew about the murders, hid the bloody coat, knew the woman was laying for her, and finally had to run for her life with the murderer pursuing her with a hatchet. The fact that the old girl eventually fell down a well was decidedly inadequate punishment, especially since Annie was brought to trial for having pushed her overboard. The trial was such a broad lampoon on our courts that lawyers and judges were moved to protest. If crime did not pay in this series, neither did virtue, and Annie led a much rougher life than the villainous murderer and her equally horrible son. If children are to be introduced to the crime world as soon as they can follow pictures, which the complacent makers of the comics seem to take lightly, then at least they might see that crime really does not pay, and that villains are adequately punished.

Dr. Lauretta Bender sums up the child's point of view when she quotes a bright eleven year old boy who said,

"I like all the mystery comics because they tell what is true. I mean, Superman always gets the bad guy. I know

it is fiction, of course, but it is the true way of things. That's what I like about it. I like the detective pictures because they always figure it out and catch the bad guys. I like the crime pictures too, because the police always catch the criminals and take them to jail." (But sometimes the comics are not convincing, and suppose the criminals kill the police and get away?) "Well, there are plenty of police in this country and others will catch them and take them to jail sometime." (But suppose in the comics they didn't?) "Then I wouldn't read the comic." This was a boy who was intellectually and emotionally capable to deal with reality; but he also enjoyed, in comics, fantasy which enhanced the securities needed to solve life's problems.¹³

He was also eleven years old. On trains we see plenty of six and seven-year olds avidly pursuing these crime comics, which no president of Comics Incorporated, and no statistics can persuade us are fit food for small children.

War—As we might expect, the war period was marked by war comics of every variety. Cops and robbers became soldiers and saboteurs, or aviators and foreign agents. "Terry and the Pirates" and "Joe Palooka" developed some good plots, and their unfailing success with the enemy undoubtedly carried reassurance to youngsters with fathers and big brothers in the service. Girls also played a heroic part in these serials—we have already mentioned the grief occasioned by the sad, sad death of Raven Sherman. Articles appeared in magazines and newspapers, letters poured in, even accompanied by floral tributes. Comic strip Wacs and Waves, all very natty and competent, helped keep up the feminine morale, and occasionally native girls rendered invaluable service without the handicap of uniform, or many clothes of any kind.

Romance—The love interest in the comics is usually at the child's level. It is slight and mild. "Superman" has been toying with

¹³"Children's Reading and the Comics," by Laretta Bender, M. D. *The Journal of Educational Sociology*. Dec. 1944. Pp. 227-228.

the idea of marriage for years. "Wonder Woman" seems to have a mate, but he never cramps her style. She still sends out her symbolic lariat, charming all who encounter her with her "love-appeal." Mostly love is a mere cog in the wheels of the plot, but occasionally the sex appeal of the undressed female, bustaceous and hippy, is fairly obvious. These are probably not too good for adolescents, but unfortunately there is still more salacious material available such as chained women captives, with the threat or the actual use of the lash. These are most undesirable in the suggestion of sadism. Otherwise the "sex-horrors," of which Sterling North wrote, have been somewhat toned down.

Educational comics—In response to the hue and cry raised by parents and teachers against the time wasting, trivial quality of the comics, several series of educational comics have been launched. There are the "True Comics," which relate the biographies of real men and women in picture script style. From Clara Barton to Winston Churchill, this series selects men and women from science, social service, and public life, and relates in graphic style their childhood adventures, youthful struggles, and mature achievements. Another series is devoted to briefing the classics. Such books as *Moby Dick*, *Ivanhoe*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *The Three Musketeers*, and other favorites have been told in the picture story style. Mr. Gaines himself is the author of the enormously popular series, *Picture Stories From the Bible*, which has brought appreciative letters from parents and Sunday Schools throughout the country.

About the retelling of the classics there are some interesting questions. Do they send the children back to the original, or do they spoil his taste for the source? Certainly for the moving picture dramatizations of books librarians can testify their presentations are invariably followed by tremendous runs on the books. Whether the children like them as well as the pictures cannot be guaranteed. That depends upon the story, the way it is written, and, above all, upon the children's reading skill and comprehension. Unfortunately every one of the books just mentioned, from *Moby Dick*

to *The Bible* is hard to read. It is quite probable that poor readers will continue to prefer the simplified form they can read easily in the comics, to the difficult book source which they just can't read at all. This is the only justification for these crudely illustrated, badly stated versions of great and good books. The poor readers never would, or could read them, and at least these meager retellings give them some idea of what the books are all about. Even so, can such meager sketches make enough of an impression to be remember? There is an aridity about them that somehow suggests easy forgetting. After all, a book must create a strong emotional response on the part of the reader in order to be remembered. The dullness and banality of these briefed versions of great books do not suggest any such emotional stirrings.

Other criticisms of "True Comics" and some of the retold classics are on a psychological basis. Josette Frank thinks there is no reason to believe that "fact is more suitable than fiction for children's reading, or to assume that only educational stories are valid."¹⁴ Dr. Bender goes still farther. She says,

So far corrective tendencies in comic writing from censors, self-appointed or otherwise, have tended to sterilize the comics as a means of satisfying the psychological needs of children. To remove fantasy (as embodied in "Superman," "Wonder Woman," "Captain Marvel," and "The Flash") or to reduce comic to the true and the real (as in "True Comics"), tends to make them more threatening and productive of anxiety, because they offer no solution to the problem of aggression in the world.¹⁵

Here is the psychiatrist, the doctor, speaking in favor of fantasy for children because, by way of its symbols, the child learns unconsciously, deep in his emotional world, how to deal with the problems in real life which disturb or terrify him. The average

¹⁴"What's In the Comics" by Josette Frank. *The Journal of Educational Psychology*. Dec., 1944. p. 218.

¹⁵"Children's Reading and the Comics." By Lauretta Bender, M. D. *The Journal of Educational Psychology*. Dec., 1944. p. 227.

layman's reaction to these educational comics is one of utter boredom. "Superman" may provoke a smile now and then, but never a true comic. They have an earnest dullness about them which smacks of the old didacticism, and misses completely the warmth and excitement of the men they record, or the classics they brief.

Children and the Comics

So much for the contents and appeal of the comics; now, what to do about them? Their language and their art is crude; the paper and general format are about as poor as possible; in most of the strips the printing constitutes a major eye strain for both young eyes and old, while the content of the plots ranges from amusing and fantastic to banal or violent or suggestive or downright deplorable. Still the children read them, not merely dull children who can't read books, but intelligent children, good readers, children with cultured backgrounds and with fine books in their homes. Nothing anxious parents or scornful librarians and teachers can do or say is going to stop them. Shall we therefore right about face, encourage the reading of the comics, and bring them into the schools as a basis for instruction? These have been suggested. Perhaps wisdom lies in a middle course, recognizing their contribution, making some use of them, but seeing that children have also good reading material at their level of interest and reading skill.

A bond of common interest—The first reason for recognizing the comics is that prohibitions and taboos have generally the opposite effect of heightening interest and promoting a secret determination to read them at all costs. A child who is forbidden the comics in the home merely develops techniques of getting them outside the home. He swaps his apples or his best jelly sandwiches to acquire them; he persuades the cook to hide them for him; he offers to have his hair cut every few days because the barber shop is gloriously equipped with his favorites. Forbid the comics and you enhance their glamor and promote interest in them. Be calm about them, assume a sympathetic attitude, read a few of them yourself so

that you can encourage the better ones with the prestige of your interest, and you will find you have a cheerful bond of conversation with your child. To reject completely the daily reading of the bulk of our students, of any age, is to remove ourselves still further from their world. Why be so solemn about the comics? The children and youth of our country don't take them seriously, but pick them up for momentary entertainment, to be cast aside and forgotten until the next issue comes along.

Comics and reading readiness—On the plus side, for thousands of our children who never see a book in their homes and never encounter any book-reading grownups, the comic strip are their first and only approach to reading. Look at four and five-year-olds, before they can read a single word. First they commandeer some adult to read and reread the comics to them; then, flat on the floor, they pore over these strange hieroglyphics with fascinated intentness. They soon learn to read pictures with a skill that amazes adults. They know that the balloons carry the words which are read to them. "What's he saying?" they demand, pointing to the printed symbols. Meanwhile their picture-reading technique carries over easily to such fine books as Marjorie Flack's *Angus* stories and their *Before We Read* books and preprimers. If young children have good books then we need not worry too much about the comics.

Uses in school—With older children we see no excuse for "Superman" Readers or English classes based upon a serious study of comic strips, so long as there are better books available for both. To use comics in this way is deliberately to choose the less good, the less rich in language, content, art, and social significance. On the other hand, if along with their good Readers, along with the fine and significant books we are introducing them to in English, the children wish to show their comics occasionally, or tell about them, certainly we should not snub their contributions but recognize them cheerfully. Laugh with a child, when his offering is funny, or praise his ability to tell one of the stories well, and then go on with other work. Sometimes children wish to show these magazines because

they are the only books they own. For this reason their contributions should be treated with respect. Then perhaps you can show them how other artists have made books in the comic strip way. Use Wanda Gag's stories, Virginia Burton's, Marjorie Flack's with the youngest children, and such books as *Five Hundred Hats for Bartholomew Cubbins*, or *Lentil*, or *Andy and the Lion*, with the oldest. Someday someone will allow children to develop their own comic strip characters and plots. For older children it would be an admirable way of developing a more critical attitude towards this material, as well as of introducing them to a clever technique full of creative possibilities.

Emotional release—Finally, let's keep our adult eyes open to the emotional dangers and possibilities of these powerful influences on juvenile emotions. Let's protest the sadistic, sexy, or too violent pictures and plots, while at the same time we emphasize casually the crime-does-not-pay theme that animates many of them. As in the fairy tales, these triumphant heroes, these persecuted but always rescued maidens, these children and youths who overcome every obstacle and surmount every difficulty provide a healthy catharsis for the emotions. Fantasy, the psychiatrists tell us, is a normal part of childhood. The child, trying to function in a world of adults, is always in a position of inferiority; so these youthful heroes become symbols of power, with whom the child identifies himself. Through these symbols, he begins to feel adequate, secure, even triumphant. Such feelings of adequacy are a needful part of growing up, and fantasy helps the child when life and the omnipotent adults frustrate him. It is important, then, that we should not laugh at his symbols, whether they are "Cinderella," and the youngest son, or "Superman," and "Wonder Woman." From "Sleeping Beauty" to "Joe Palooka," from "Snow White" to "Hop Harrigan Ace of the Airways," children turn these symbols to good account. Emotional frustrations are resolved, and gradually confidence grows.

In conclusion, there is probably little cause to worry about children and their comic strips as long as they are also enjoying good

books. The comic addicts who should worry us begin to emerge about fifth grade level. They are frequently the extremely poor readers who are unable to handle independently the kind of books which they might enjoy. They turn to the comics, find exciting stories which are easy to read, and these restore their confidence and self respect. Their excessive devotion to these magazines is often an attempt to escape unpleasant reality. Drugged with story after story, adventure after adventure, the child forgets momentarily the everyday world where he is failing to find normal satisfaction. In both cases, continuous reading of these lurid picture-tales should be regarded as a symptom, the cause should be sought and every effort made to get the child back on the right track. Easy books which he can read and enjoy, and remedial reading work to patch up his reading wounds, are both indicated for children who are afraid of books. For the child who is running away from himself, a feeling of success is essential. He must experience the joy of achievement in some field, of contributing to the group and belonging because he can contribute. Our chief concern must always be with the happiness and sense of achievement which every child needs. Cheerful, wholesome, growing children are of first importance. Devotion to a few lurid comics may be merely symptoms and probably won't turn the scale for better or worse in a child's development if he is armed with strength from other sources.

Adults in the State of Minnesota who answered the question "Would you like to have your local school include nursery schools as a regular part of its program?" slightly favored the nursery schools. Briefly, about half of the people interviewed for an opinion, favored including nursery schools and kindergartens as a regular part of the school program.

A majority of the "city" people approved and a majority of the "country" people disapproved. Of those favoring the program, 80 percent were willing to have taxes raised if this was needed to provide the service. A larger proportion of the "approving" people had attended college and were in the "above average" economic bracket.

The Reading Grade Placement of the Newbery Prize Book "Rabbit Hill"

LEO R. MILLER¹*

WHILE WORKING as a classroom teacher over a period of years the author became interested in the field of children's literature and particularly in that segment reserved for the winners of the John Newbery prize, awarded yearly by a committee selected by the American Library Association. After years of unfruitful efforts aimed at popularizing these unquestionably fine books with elementary school pupils of superior reading ability, the writer reached the following conclusions:

1. The Newbery prize books are not popular with elementary school pupils.
2. The books are much too difficult for pupils of average or even better-than-average reading power.

These conclusions led to experimentation to determine just at what level these books could be read with profit. This experiment dealt with the first twenty-three winners of the Newbery prize and was reported in the March, 1946 issue of the *Elementary School Journal*². Briefly, the study indicated that:

1. Only *Hitty* and *Thimble Summer* were suitable for elementary pupils of average reading ability, if we consider the sixth grade as the last in the elementary school and the seventh as the first year of junior high school.

¹Principal, Thacher School, Kansas City, Missouri.

²Miller, Leo R., "Reading-Grade Placement of the First Twenty Books Awarded the John Newbery Prize", *Elementary School Journal*, March, 1946.

2. The majority of the Newbery prize books should be placed in the libraries of junior high schools and even of senior high schools if they are to be used to best advantage by boys and girls.

At the time the study was made *Rabbit Hill*, by Lawson had not yet been chosen as the 1945 winner of the Newbery award. This present report will outline the procedure used in attempting to determine the reading grade level of *Rabbit Hill*, that procedure, incidentally, being the same as that employed with the previous twenty-three prize winning books.

Method of Procedure

The book *Rabbit Hill* was opened at random at approximately quarter-points and a generous sample of the text taken from the book at each of those points. If, in this random sampling, the book was opened to a full-page illustration or chapter ending, a few pages were turned either way until a page of uninterrupted text was reached. This step gave the experimenter four random selections of textual material.

For each of these random samplings, four comprehension questions were framed. These questions were designed to resemble questions asked by classroom teachers in class assignments or discussions. Many were of the "who," "what," "when," "why," "where," and "how" type. Others were framed to determine the readers' familiarity with the meanings of certain key words in the text. The entire comprehension test for *Rabbit Hill* consisted of four samples of text and sixteen comprehension questions, four dealing with each sample.

This comprehension test was then duplicated and administered to 102 sixth and seventh grade pupils whose paragraph comprehension scores had been determined earlier in the same year by the use of the Stanford Achievement Reading test. The scores made by the subjects on the Newbery comprehension test were then matched

with the scores made by the same subjects on the Stanford test and arranged in tabular form.

The writer chose to assign *Rabbit Hill* to that reading grade level in which at least fifty per cent of the subjects reached or exceeded the seventy-five per cent level of comprehension. The fifty per cent level was selected because it is the point beyond which a single case determines the majority and because in a normal distribution curve the fifty per cent point would also mark the location of the mean, the median, and the mode. The seventy-five per cent level of comprehension was selected rather arbitrarily but the same point has been used as a criterion of acceptable comprehension by two other workers in the field of readability research, Lorge³ and Flesch⁴.

Conclusion

A study of the table reveals that not a single one of the nine subjects with third grade reading ability reached or exceeded the seventy-five per cent level of comprehension. Of the twenty subjects having fourth grade reading ability only five per cent reached the acceptable comprehension level. Eight per cent of the fifth grade group and thirty-two per cent of the sixth grade group reached the desired level and it is not until we reach the seventh grade level of reading comprehension that we find at least half the subjects reaching or surpassing the seventy-five per cent level of comprehension. From that point on all subjects in each level reach the accepted standard on the comprehension test on *Rabbit Hill*.

We may conclude then, that if this experiment is valid and the subjects fairly representative of elementary school readers, then the Newbery prize book *Rabbit Hill* should be placed for most efficient reading in the hands of pupils having at least seventh grade reading ability.

³Lorge, Irving, "Predicting Readability," *Teachers College Record*, March, 1944.

⁴Flesch, Rudolf Franz, "Marks of Readable Style," *Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University*, 1943.

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(Continued on page 196)

Look and Listen

Edited by LILLIAN NOVOTNY*

Radio

Have you listened to *Superman* recently? Although this children's program has frequently been included in a blanket condemnation of all children's commercial broadcasts, a show of hands at a section meeting devoted to a discussion of children's programs at the School Broadcast Conference indicated that of the 700 teachers and educators in the audience, only *seven* had heard a broadcast of the show. Hal Davis, of the Kenyon & Eckhardt Agency which handles the program, pointed out that *Superman* is credited with being the first of the children's shows to campaign for tolerance.

An interesting sequel to this is the announcement made in a news story by *Billboard*. Executives of Kenyon & Eckhardt (the agency handling the account), the Mutual Network (which carries the show), *Superman, Inc.* (which "packages" the show), and Kellogg (the sponsor) have completed plans to roadshow a *Superman* company in connection with a many-angled campaign for tolerance and the general improvement of children's broadcasts. Representatives of these companies will

attend the showings, which will be run in conjunction with Parent Teachers Associations and other civic and educational groups, and will discuss radio's desire for constructive criticism. Emphasis will be placed on the fact that listeners themselves must assume the responsibility for conveying their thoughts to sponsors and stations.

Watch for this presentation in your city.

The subject of radio criticism has been of great concern to the industry itself. This fact was apparent in the accounts of the convention of the National Association of Broadcasters, and again in a broadcast of the *Town Meeting of the Air* when the question was raised as to whether radio is serving the public interest. Mark Woods, President of the American Broadcasting Company, made a pertinent analysis,¹ part of which is quoted here:

¹America's Town Meeting broadcast, ABC, December 12, 1946.

²Miss Novotny, a teacher in the Chicago Public Schools, is a member of the Council's Committee on Radio and Photoplay, and was formerly a member of the Chicago Radio Council.

"Radio in America today is a young and imperfect voice. It is operated by human beings, not perfect machines. Therefore I must ask you to judge the radio you know, not by the standards of perfection which no person can expect to meet, but by the reasonable standards of performance which you would ordinarily apply to the best effects of your fellow-men.

"We know that a free nation encourages an extremely wide variety of tastes. Yet these tastes are satisfied even now to the extent that the radio listener—which includes 92 per cent of the country's families—devotes more than four hours every day to his radio set. This is more time than he devotes to his daily newspapers, his motion pictures, his books, and his magazines combined.

"Still, we hear of intelligent people who apply a kind of blindfold test to radio. If they fail to find something they like on the air at the very moment they tune in—these people say they are through with it. But do they walk blindfold into their bookstore? Do they buy the nearest magazine on the newsstand? Do they want to abolish all newspapers because they do not like the comics? The answer is no."

This point of view is also voiced by William S. Paley, Chairman of the Board of the Columbia Broadcasting System, who said,²

"I want to emphasize as much as I can the importance of encouraging intelligent discrimination. I should like to see people angry when they are angry at *particular* stations, *particular* programs, *particular* offenders, and not all radio."

This does not apply only to adults. Children, too, may be encouraged to write constructive criticism. Thinking along these lines may be built up through class discussions of programs with which they are familiar. This will lead quite naturally to an analysis of what it is that makes one program better than another. Ultimately the child will begin to exercise critical discrimination.

If you've felt frustrated while listening to audience participation shows over the air, you'll enjoy the satire in "Here in the Studio," by Edwin O'Connor, published in the "Accent on Living" section of the *Atlantic*, October, 1946, pp. 137-138. In the September issue of the same magazine, pages 130-132, he treats radio comedy in an amusing

²Address before the twenty-fourth annual convention of the National Association of Broadcasters.

essay entitled, "No Laughing Matter."

The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which presents an extensive listing of children's programs, offers sample school radio scripts for study use, without charge: *The Wonderful Porridge Pot*, *The Frog Prince*, *Prince Edward Island*, *Weather Instruments*, *Paul Kane*, *Democracy Begins Now*, *Humanity First*, *The First Blood Bank*, *Story of Newsprint*, *Nature's Revenge*, *Charlottetown*, *St. Catherine*. Since they are for study purposes, they may not be broadcast, reprinted, or used for public performance. They may be had by writing to Supervisor of School Broadcasts, CBC, Box 500, Toronto, 1.

Films

Encyclopaedia Britannica True Nature Series, Encyclopaedia Britannica Press, 20 North Wacker Drive, Chicago 6, Illinois. Series of 12 booklets is priced at 50c each.

The publication of these booklets represents a forward step in the integration of movies with textual material, for the excellent pictures which tell the story are taken directly from the film of the same name. A brief running narrative account prepared by the editors of the Britannica Junior accompanies each picture. Inclusion of these booklets in the classroom library would prove a val-

uable aid in following up the movie showing, or as supplementary reading in connection with a nature study unit on animals. Titles of the series include: *Animals of the Woods*; *Gray Squirrel*; *Snapping Turtle*; *Water Birds*; *Black Bear Twins*; *Three Little Kittens*; *Pride the Saddle Horse*; *Shep the Farm Dog*; *Goats and Kids*; *Bunny Rabbit*; *Animals of the Farm*; *Elephants*.

Funds made available by the Encyclopaedia Britannica for the third annual summer tuition scholarships will enable carefully selected teachers and administrators to enroll in summer courses in the utilization of audio-visual instructional materials in the classroom. The only requirement is that educators who apply must have special responsibility for audio-visual instruction programs in conjunction with their regular positions.

Dr. Stephen M. Corey, director of the center for the study of audio-visual materials at the University of Chicago, and chairman of a committee which made the selections, announced the ten schools selected by the committee. The major geographic areas of the country are represented, and applications for scholarships may be sent at once to the following administrators:

Mr. Frank N. Freeman, dean of the

School of Education, University of California; B. F. Holland, School of Education, University of Texas; Miss Sandra George, director, Educational Film Library, Syracuse University; J. W. Foust, director of Summer Session, Central Michigan College of Education; Paul Wendt, director of visual education, University of Minnesota; Frank E. Sorenson, Teachers College, University of Nebraska; B. F. Mitchell, head of the Department of Education, Louisiana State University; Osman R. Hull, dean of the school of education, University of Southern California; A. John Bartky, dean of the school of Education, Stanford University; George B. Smith, dean of the school of Education, University of Kansas, and Dr. Stephen M. Corey, University of Chicago.

The eleven institutions, representing every section of the United States and ranging from Syracuse, New York, to California, will award 102 tuition scholarships this summer.

"Operation Underground," a 20-minute 2-reel 16mm sound motion picture, available from Film Publishers, Inc., 25 Broad Street, New York 4, N. Y., tells the story of how one section of the French underground helped the Allied cause in the past war. Under the eyes of the Nazis, "Operation Underground"

was filmed by three Frenchmen with amazing courage. Though members of the *Reseau Bourgeois*, a French resistance group, the cameramen were sometimes forced to work for the Nazis. This film, therefore, became their sole proof for exoneration under charges of collaboration.

Recordings

Primer of Children's Records, prepared by Lyon & Healy, 243 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, provides a listing of available children's records for three age groups: 1) for children of pre-school age; 2) for children 5 to 8 years of age; and 3) for children 8 to 18 years of age. Included are nursery rhymes, fairy tales, adventure stories, animal stories, and children's classics. The listing is free upon request. Sample listings from the 5 to 8 group include:

Children's Hour (3 records in album) *Children's Hour*; Hymn to the Night; Psalm of Life; Arrow and Song; Rainy Day; The Building of a Ship; The Village Blacksmith; The Day Is Done. Donald Crisp. A-434 \$2.92.

Fairy Tales (2 records in folder) *Cinderella*; *Sleeping Beauty*; *Little Red Riding Hood*; *Dog, Donkey, Cat, Rooster*;

Jack and the Beanstalk; Frank Luther. C-53 \$1.32.

Little Black Sambo (2 records in folder) Paul Wing with sound effects. Y-312. \$1.52.

Rapunzel (2 records in folder). Dame May Whitty with musical background. Y-325. \$1.52.

In the 8 to 12 group, samples include:

Count of Monte Cristo (Dumas).

Herbert Marshall with cast. A-337. \$5.09.

In the American Tradition. Addresses of Jefferson, Lincoln, Wilson and F. D. Roosevelt. Read by Orson Welles. A-394. \$4.04.

Rip Van Winkle (Washington Irving). Walter Huston with cast. A-432 \$2.65.

Equipment

If you are one of those people who would like to use radio in the classroom but can't because the school is not equipped, you will be interested in the solution of this problem by the Lawndale School in Philadelphia. The P. T. A. agreed to furnish a radio for each class that had a 100% representation in the P. T. A. by the end of their membership drive. As a result, every room is provided with a new radio.

Publications

Radio Is Yours, by Jerome H. Spingarn. Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 22 East Thirty-eighth Street, New York City 16. 10c.

This pamphlet by a former attorney with the F. C. C. tells how radio listeners may use weapons at their command to obtain better programs. He analyzes the effects of advertising on the broadcasting schedules, which become a mere by-product of a selling operation. "If an advertiser thinks his best customers are morons with low sales resistance, he will prefer a program that will attract five morons to one that will attract ten critical listeners." The author shows what listeners may do to remedy the situation.

Film and Radio Guide will be glad to send a reprint of a guide to the discussion of *The Yearling* to readers of *Elementary English* on receipt of 15c, or 20 copies for \$1.00. The original appeared in the February issue of the magazine. Write to *Film and Radio Guide*, 172 Renner Avenue, Newark 8, New Jersey.

The Educational Scene

The Association for Childhood Education will hold its 1947 Study Conference at Oklahoma City, Oklahoma on April 7-11. The theme of the Conference is "New Horizons in Childhood Education."

A chart in the National Education Association publication *Our Children* reveals that enrollments in teachers colleges declined from 175,000 in 1940 to 65,000 in the school year 1945-46. In the same period emergency certificates increased from 5,000 in 1940 to 110,000 in the school year 1945-46.

Elizabeth Shishmareva reports in the January-February issue of the *Horn Book* that an exhibition of young reader's books was recently held in Moscow by the State Publishing House for Children's Literature. During the year 1945 this publishing house printed 185 books with a total of 8 million copies. In the same year it announced a competition for the book judged to be the finest in text, illustration, and format from the books shown in the exhibition. Eight awards for the best-made children's books were instituted in 1946. The exhibition included books for chil-

dren of pre-school age, classics and folklore, modern fiction, historic, military, and popular science fiction, adventure tales, literature of the peoples of the USSR, and several others.

The Children's Book Council calendar for March 1947 lists March 17-23 as National Hobby Week. It is sponsored by the Hobby Guild of America, 34 West 33rd Street, New York 1, N. Y. A poster is available free from the sponsors. March 21 is the birthday of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685). The Children's Spring Book Festival poster will be available without charge to bookstores, schools, and librarians, to be used in connection with book programs. Send requests to *New York Herald Tribune*, 230 West 41 Street, Room 1105, New York 18, N. Y. The CBS school of the Air will dramatize *The Trumpeter of Krakow* on March 13, *Huckleberry Finn* on March 20, and *Mystery Island* on March 27. An exhibit of twenty mounted photos of Russian children at school and at play is available for \$1.50 a week from the National Council of American Soviet Friendship, 114 East 32nd Street, New York 16, N. Y.

A recent release of the American Library Association reports that boys' and girls' interests in reading are much the same as those of their elders. The most frequently read titles among recent children's books are: Lenski's *Strawberry Girl*, Farley's *The Black Stallion Returns*, Lambert's *Up Goes the Curtain*, Gray's *Sandy*, Haywood's *Betsy and the Boys*, McGinley's *The Plain Princess*, Petersham's *The Rooster Crows*, Tunis' *Yea! Wildcats!* Estes' *The Hundred Dresses*, and Henry's *Justin Morgan Had a Horse*.

Among the ten significant educational events of 1946, the *Ed Press Newsletter* lists the following: (1) President Truman signed the national School Lunch Act authorizing federal aid to the state in establishing, operating, and expanding the school lunch program; (2) College enrolment in the fall reached the record breaking figure of 2 million students, 800,000 of whom are veterans; (3) The United States National Commission consisting of 100 persons from different organizations and walks of life appointed to advise the state department about UNESCO affairs and to help national organizations to take part in the work of UNESCO, held its first meeting September 23-26 in Washington; (4) California passed a constitutional

amendment providing for a \$2,400 minimum salary for teachers—the national minimum recommended by the Commission on Teachers Education and Professional Standards.

The editors of the *Educator's Washington Dispatch*, who prepared the *Schoolman's Almanac*, include many of the same items among the ten most important educational events of 1946, but add, among others, the following: "The National Council of Teachers of English announced formation of a curriculum commission to make a three-year study with a view toward revision of the nation's school program in English."

Four posters entitled "We Hold These Truths" illustrated with photographs of Americans at work and pertinent statements by George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, and Franklin D. Roosevelt, are available without charge from the Council Against Intolerance in America, 17 East 42nd Street, New York 17, N. Y.

The list of Newbery-Caldecott winners is now available in book-mark form, and copies of it may be secured from the Children's Book Council, 62 West 45th Street, New York 19, N. Y., at fifty cents for one hundred copies.

The David McKay Company of Philadelphia has purchased the children's book department of Reynal and Hitchcock, Inc., and has taken over its juveniles as of January 1, 1947. Such well-known Reynal and Hitchcock books as the *Mary Poppins* books and Phyllis Whitney's *Willow Hill*, as well as the recent publications *The Picture Story of China*, *The Picture Story of Holland*, *Henry Morgan*, *Pirate*, and *Make Way for a Sailor*, will henceforth be distributed by David McKay.

A sixty-four page pamphlet entitled *Social and Emotional Readiness for Reading*, by Emmett A. Betts, reprinted from the February-March, 1944 issue of *Educational Administration and Supervision*, is available from the Division of Research and Publications, the Reading Clinic, Department of Psychology, Temple University, Philadelphia 22, Pa., at fifty cents a copy.

The Children's Book Council announces that Children's Book Week of 1947 will be celebrated during the third week of November 16-22, in order to avoid conflict with American Education Week, celebrated during the second week of November.

The material found in the recent pamphlet, *What Do You Know about Blindness?*, makes an excellent basis for a discussion in elementary school classes. It is published by the Public Affairs Committee, Inc., 22 East 38th St., New York 16, N. Y. Ten cents.

Plans are being made for the promotion of the 1947 observance of Pan-American Week, April 13-19 and the celebration of Pan-American Day on April 14. The slogan for the 1947 observance of Pan-American Day is "Cooperation, Key-note of the Americas." April 14 is the day on which the Pan-American Union was created in 1890. It is observed throughout the continent by a display of the national flags and by colorful ceremonies.

Post-graduate summer school will be held at Statford-on-Avon from July 5 to August 16, 1947. The subject of the school will be "English Literature from 1500 to 1640." The president of the school will be Professor Allardyce Nicoll, formerly at Yale, professor of English at the University of Birmingham. The charge for board, residence, and tuition will be about \$250.00. Applications from American students should be submitted by March 15

to the Director of the Institute of International Education, 2 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y. The envelope should be marked "Birmingham University Summer School."

The original draft of Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," together with a copy believed to be the one from which he read his main dedication, is on display in the Library of Congress, as part of the permanent exhibit of Lincoln's memorabilia.

An interesting reading record blank entitled *My Reading Design* is published by the *News Journal* of North Manchester, Indiana. It provides for a listing of books that children have read, along with a dis-

tribution on a chart indicating the variety of themes represented by the titles. The price is three-and-a-half cents per copy.

Here are the Junior Guild selections for the month of March, 1947: for boys and girls 6, 7, and 8 years of age, *The Lollypop Factory and Lots of Others* by Mary Elting in collaboration with Margaret Gossett, Doubleday, \$2.00; for boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years of age, *Miss Hickory* by Carolyn Sherwin Bailey, Viking, \$2.50; for older girls, 12 to 16 years of age, *Adventure in Tunisia* by Dahris Martin, Julian Messner, \$2.25; and for older boys, 12 to 16 years of age, *Jeremy Pepper* by Frances Rogers and Alice Beard, Lippincott, \$2.00.

NEWBERY PRIZE BOOK "RABBIT HILL"

(Continued from page 187)

13. Vogel, Mabel, and Washburne, Carleton, "An Objective Method of Determining Grade Placement of Children's Reading Material," *Elementary School Journal*, January, 1928.
14. Washburne, Carleton, and Morphett, Mabel Vogel, "Grade Placement of Children's Books," *Elementary School Journal*, January, 1938.
15. Zeligs, Rose, "Children's Opinions of Newbery Prize Books," *Elementary English Review*, October, 1940.

Review and Criticism

[The reviews in this issue are by LaTourette Stockwell, Kathryn E. Hodapp, Charlemae Rollins, Frances E. Whitehead, M. E. Kier, Audrey F. Carpenter and Ivah Green. Unsigned reviews are by the editor.]

For Teachers

Learning World Goodwill in the Elementary School. 25th Yearbook, The National Elementary Principal. National Education Association, \$2.00.

Much has been written about the need for developing attitudes of friendliness to peoples of other races, religions, and nationalities, but the need for concrete examples of inter-group education continues great. This excellent yearbook of the elementary school principals supplies an abundance of such concrete materials, developed in entire school systems, within individual schools, and in teacher education institutions. Valuable lists of materials and sources of information are supplied.

For Early Adolescents

North Star Shining. By Hildegard Hoyt Swift. Illustrated by Lynd Ward. Morrow, \$2.50.

This "Pictorial history of the American Negro" is in reality a beautifully illustrated poem recounting the sufferings and the achievements of the American Negro from the earliest days to the present. It is difficult to say whether Lynd Ward's full-page illustrations or Mrs. Hoyt's eloquent lines are the more moving. Together the author and artist have produced a young people's book of first importance, a fitting sequel to Mrs. Swift's fine story, *The Railroad to Freedom*. Both volumes should be in all school libraries.

The Boats on the River. By Marjorie Flack. Illustrated by Jay Hyde Barnum. Viking, \$2.50.

Certainly one of the most beautiful books of the year. Marjorie Flack has written in rhythmic prose a story of a wandering, busy river and the busy boats upon it, and Jay Barnum has made full color illustrations of ferry boats, paddle boats, ocean liners, and many other types of craft so full of motion and translucent colors that they practically sail before your eyes as you turn the pages. The kind of book youngsters slip under their pillows at night, as will adults who love the Hudson and New York harbor. L. T. S.

Rommany Luck. By Patricia Gordon.

Illustrated by Raffaello Busoni.

Viking Press, \$2.00.

An adventurous tale of a gypsy boy and his dog who lived in England in the seventeenth century. Mrs. Gordon has considerable knowledge of gypsy lore and this tale has the ring of authenticity as well as being a good yarn. Busoni's black and white drawings catch the gay spirit and add to its charm.

L. T. S.

Scotchtown Tale. By Bette Elise

Davis. Illustrated by Margaret Ayer, Thomas Nelson, \$2.00.

Older girls will like this story of the life of Dolly Madison at Scotchtown, the former home of Patrick Henry. All except the last chapter is about her happy Quaker childhood during the tense days of the American Revolution. While little is actually known of her childhood the reader feels that the events in this story really happened. Black and white illustrations by Margaret Ayer.

K. E. H.

Airport Summer. By Eileen Wood. Il-

lustrated by Walter Buehr. Henry Holt, \$2.00.

Terry Wylie spends the summer with his Aunt Peggy and her friend Carol who have bought and run an airport. There is a lot about flying, operating an airport, a model plane

club, and a mystery. Not a great story but boys will probably like it.

K. E. H.

How God Fix Jonab. By Lorenz

Graham. Illustrated by Letterio

Calappi. Foreword by Dr. W. E.

B. DuBois. Reynal & Hitchcock, \$2.50.

Poetic retelling of the most familiar Bible stories in the idiom of the modern West-African Native. The stories combine all the rich folk flavor of African-lore with a modern vernacular not unlike the Negro dialect stories by Roark Bradford. The collection includes, among others, stories of Jonah, Job, David, Joshua, Daniel, Sampson, Solomon, Moses Ruth, Esther, Elisha, Jacob, Cain and the story of the Birth of Christ.

The author's introduction gives some valuable information on dialect and its use. The stories will be excellent for reading aloud to adults or mature high school students. For grades 11 and 12.

C. R.

Jonathan Goes West. By Stephen W.

Meador. Illustrated by Edward Shenton. Harcourt, \$2.25.

About 1845 Jonathan leaves relatives in Maine to rejoin his father on his prairie farm in Illinois. By river boat, train, coach, horseback and on foot he travels. For a time he drives for a blind and itinerant

bookseller and throughout there is the threatening and shadowing figure of a red-haired highwayman. There is nothing fresh and invigorating, here, to recommend. Just another boy's adventure story. F. E. W.

Clover Creek. By Nancy Paschal. Illustrated by Alice Carsey. Thomas Nelson & Sons, \$2.00.

Lucy Ann is a 17 year-old Texas country girl who goes out with her dog Rompy to look for work. She finds a job in a nursery (which she thought was a place for children) and learns to be a "botanical assistant." There she meets the spoiled daughter of her employer and a group of her sophisticated young college friends. Rompy is the cause of much embarrassment to them all but Lucy Ann's loyalty and devotion for her pet helps to make this a thoroughly appealing story. Older girls will love the way she holds her own with the college crowd and at the same time shows the snobbish daughter how to become a useful person. Recommended for high school girls.

C. R.

The Castle of Adventure. By Enid Blyton. Macmillan, \$2.00.

This is the kind of improbable adventure-mystery story that children will label as "neat." Completely without adult supervision, four children spend three days and nights in

an abandoned castle, but not so quietly as they had expected for a gang of Nazi spies was also using the castle as their headquarters. By the ingenious use of hiding places and squirming through an underground channel of a mountain stream, they were able to observe and report the activities of the gang to outside help and authority, and to aid in their capture.

Perhaps the English background accounts for what seems to me to be stilted conversation. Perhaps youngsters in England say "I shall" and "whilst" in the middle of an exciting adventure, but I doubt it. However, this will probably not deter American children from enjoying the thrills of the story. Print and paper are good, and frequent illustrations enliven the reading for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders.

A. F. C.

For the Middle Years

Armenian Folk Tales. Russian Version by I. Khatchatrianz. Translated by N. Orloff. Illustrated by Martros Saryan. Colonial House, Philadelphia, \$2.00.

This book is undeniably a contribution to folklore literature. However, whether or not you will give it to your child or use it in your classroom will depend upon what school of thought you belong to on the sub-

ject of blood and thunder books for children and upon the subject of comics with their confusing pictures of vice and virtue. In all of these tales, the primitive origin is evident in their excessive details about bloody and horrible matters. In some of them, there is an imaginative charm which counterbalances the barbarism portrayed. But in others, such as *Lokbman, the Physician*, there is little to compensate for its horrendous potions and their administration. Further, any child brought up in a home where religion of any creed is taught, would certainly receive strange jolts from the unmotivated deviltries of the priests, which are a major portion of the story of *Anait*, and most adults would find them difficult to explain. The illustrations, by the dean of Soviet painters, are most distinguished. I would say, use judiciously.

L. T. S.

Abe Lincoln and His Times, 1809-1865. By the editors of *Look* and Enid La Monte Meadowcroft. Crowell, \$2.50.

A picture book containing reproductions of contemporary paintings, magazine illustrations, and newspaper cuts from the period in American history from Revolutionary times through the Civil War. Log cabins, carriages, early railroads, the first steamboats, street scenes, and

best of all, photographs of Lincoln and his friends, are accompanied by exciting story material that will appeal to boys and girls in the intermediate grades and beyond.

*

Legends in Action. By Nellie McCaslin. Illustrated by Dady Healy. Row, Peterson and Co., \$1.32.

Here are ten dramatized legends from as many nations, suitable for use in middle and upper grades. Simple production notes accompany each play calling for a minimum of simple properties and costuming. Casts call for eight characters on an average. Dialogue is simple and natural and appropriate to the country portrayed.

I. G.

Starlight. By Regina J. Woody. William Morrow and Co., \$2.00.

Starlight, a horse properly known as Star of the Summer Night, is gentled by Judy. The story involves dogs and horses, with Judy's companionship penetrating both extremes of human society. Each learning from the other, there are parallel developments. Interest in the plot will not flag, but Mrs. Woody's story-telling techniques is let down by the hackneyed expressions that she uses: "pretty grim," "the engine purring," "glued to the saddle." A book needs more than plot and sentiment.

F. E. W.

Arabian Nights. Collected and edited by Andrew Lange. With decorations by Vera Bock. Longmans, Green, \$2.00.

Andrew Lang's collection of Arabian Nights stories first appeared in 1898. Their vast popularity in the intervening years has not diminished. This attractive edition presents the old tales in modern format, with appropriate line drawings, for the delight of a new generation of boys and girls. A few minor changes have been made, but all the favorite stories are here—Aladdin and His Wonderful Lamp, Scheherazade, Haroun-al-Raschid, The Forty Thieves, and many others.

Vicki: A Guide Dog. Written and Illustrated by Margaret S. Johnson and Helen Lossing Johnson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. New York. \$2.00.

This is a story about how Vicki, a boxer puppy, after living through an air raid in England is brought to the United States where, after living as a city dog for some months, she became a Seeing Eye Dog. The best part of the book is that which tells of her training. The pencil-sketched illustrations are very good but this reviewer feels the story itself is lacking in literary quality.

I. G.

A Picture History of Britain. Written and Illustrated by Clarke Hutton. Houghton Mifflin Company, \$2.50.

This picture history is so colorfully illustrated it will intrigue a child to look at the pictures, only to find that the text and pictures do not always coincide. There is too much of both. The combination, to this reviewer, seemed confusing, and even the brilliancy of the illustrations is likely not to hold a reader's interest through the continuous array of factual statements about the history of England from Cave Men to World War II.

I. G.

For Younger Children

A Kitten's Tale. Written and illustrated by Audrey Chalmers. Viking, \$1.50.

About a homeless but hopeful kitten who addresses his questioning song to the varied shoes of varied passers-by. It was a long time before he found the right pair. They proved to be patent leather and so shiny he could adjust his whiskers in their gleam. The results were lovely. Children 4-8 will adore him. Older ones will too.

L. T. S.

The Blot: Little City Cat. By Phyllis Crawford. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney. Henry Holt, \$1.50. Another homeless kitten, this one

a very black one, whose adventures in the big city prove exciting and revealing. A delightful story with delightful black and white illustrations.

L. T. S.

The Live Dolls in Wonderland. By

Josephine Scribner Gates. Illustrated by Evelyn Copelman. Bobbs-Merrill, \$2.00.

This 3-in-1 presentation of more adventures follows *The Book of Live Dolls*, is a new edition. The Queen's wand-waving brings to life a town's dolls whose mothers (and their mothers) are not at all non-plushed. The saccharine style, much too condescending with a glimpse of the Queen's "dear face," allusions to "you, Little Reader," and "the dollies' train" with its "brave little engine," make for a watered-down type of writing. The portrayal of the black doll, Dinah, begging "to be whited up for the queen's wedding," and speaking ungrammatically throughout, is additional reason for the book's absolute rejection. F. E. W.

Who Blew That Whistle? By Leone Adelson. Illustrated by Oscar Fabres. William R. Scott, \$1.25.

The experiences of a traffic policeman are told with interest and feeling. The difficulty that arises when the traffic whistle tries to direct the traffic alone gives the reader a hilarious time. A realization of co-

operation and an understanding that neither the traffic policeman nor the whistle alone could direct the traffic may be gained from this book. Illustrations will appeal to all children. Ages 6-10. M. E. K.

Just Like You. By Evelyn Beyer. Illustrations by Dahlov Ipcav. William R. Scott, \$1.00.

All Babies Have Mummies and Daddies. "Just Like You" is a gay book. Each animal has a full page portrait, the father receiving as much importance as the mother. The short story on each page presents opportunity for the preschool child to "read" as the book is read aloud. Ages 2-5. M. E. K.

The Romney Gay A B C. Written and illustrated by Romney Gay. Grossert & Dunlap, \$.50.

A nice alphabet book that repeats each letter sound several times. First in the child's name—again in the Jingle of childish activities that the colorful illustrations portray. Ages 3-6. M. E. K.

Holiday. By Wesley Dennis. Viking, \$2.00.

An interesting horse story in which a blue ribbon winner gets tired of winning and wants a holiday. Holiday tells the story himself with excitement and anticipation. His plans were all made for a holiday in

the green fields of his old home. The big night came—at the last minute, Holiday heard some news that changed his plans, and He Was Happy Doing It! A delightful book with human interest. Ages 6-12. M. E. K.

Where Are You Going? By Charlotte Steiner. Doubleday & Co., \$1.25.

Everyone seemed to be going someplace. Things were happening as Tommy and his dog, Rusty, hurried out to find where everybody was going. The stories of the animals and people they met are satisfying, but the real satisfaction for Tommy came when he joined his friends going to school. Ages 4-7. M. E. K.

Christmas Stocking. By Dorothy Baruch. Illustrated by Lucienne Block. William R. Scott. \$.50.

Any pre-school child will enjoy the pictures and story of Bobby Joe. It began on Christmas Eve when Bobby Joe hung up a flat empty stocking. How that stocking was changed on Christmas Morning to a big, round, bumpy stocking full of oh! so many things, will delight the pre-school child. The excitement of their own stocking will be relived with this book even after Christmas. Ages 2-4. M. E. K.

The Little Green Car. By Caroline Emerson. Illustrated by Paul Galdone. Grossett & Dunlap, \$.50.

Children enjoy the colorful, humorous illustrations. Yet this does not seem to be enough to warrant the recommendation. We adults can appreciate the feelings of the courageous little car when the taxi crowded him into a "Jam"; also when the little car, after months of idleness in a garage, found himself on the road again and finally an opportunity to settle his score with taxicabs! One objects to the fact that the book encourages revenge. Ages 6-10

M. E. K.

The Way the Animals Walk. By Louise Woodcock. Illustrations by Ida Binney. William R. Scott, \$1.00.

All children have a wonderful time pretending. Johnnie wants to walk as the animals do. He observes them, and he imitates each as every small child will want to when he sees the pictures and hears the short story of each. The unusual illustrations in bright blue and bright green, contrasted with some rust and black, are full of action and will be inspiring and satisfying to the child. Ages 3-6. M. E. K.

Five in the Family. By Dorothy Baruch and Elizabeth Montgomery. Illustrated by Miriam Stony Hurford. Scott, Foresman and Company.

One of the Health and Personal Development books of the Curricu-

lum Foundation Series, this deals with day-by-day experiences of a family of five. Important concepts relating to health, safety, and personal adjustment are woven in but need to be more thoroughly discussed under a teacher's guidance. The book is planned with the idea of helping children to cope with their individual problems. Illustrations in color will insure children's interest. I. G.

Peter Painter's Merry-go-round, By Frank M. Webber. David McKay, \$1.00.

Four fairy tales about an elf named Peter Painter. Illustrations by Vera Neville are better than the text. Mixture of fairy tale and realism is unconvincing. Words are at times too difficult for age group intended. Grade 3 K. E. H.

The Silver Box and Other Stories for Children. By Henry Cragin Walker. Illustrated by Frances MacBrayne. Bruce Humphries \$.25.

A tiny booklet of six short fairy tales with dainty illustrations in attractive colors. The stories are too pointedly moralistic to be widely enjoyed by children. The author has further taken away a child's joy in reading these tales for fun by tacking on a "quiz" at the end of each.

I. G.

The Brave Bantam. By Louise Seaman.

Illustrated by Helen Sewell. The Macmillan Company, \$1.00.

Picture story book which little children will enjoy. The little brown Bantam hen had lots of sense. She taught the other chickens on the farm how to watch out for hawks, stray dogs, and foxes; how to get up into a tree without a board; how to take a bath and many other things. She helped to win the war by being busy and brave in many ways. At the Victor Harvest Show there were many prize winners of all kinds but little hen won a special award "for the oldest, busiest, and bravest hen" in the show. Recommended for telling and reading aloud. Ages 6-10.

C. R.

Elephants. By Herbert S. Zim. Morrow, \$2.00.

A book about elephants for younger children. Many black and white illustrations by Joy Buba. Simple text and large print will appeal to second and third grade children.

K. E. H.

The Hide-away Ducklings. By Jane Flory. Grosset & Dunlap, \$.50.

An attractive picture book about the missing ducklings. All the animals of the barnyard searched and finally found them swimming in the pond. End papers especially attractive. Well worth the price.

K. E. H.

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